

Message Text

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SUBJ: PREMIER PROMISES REFORMS AND LAW AND ORDER

REF: MADRID 390

SUMMARY: IN SPEECH TO NATIONAL MOVEMENT JAN 19 ARIAS SAID
AUTHORITY WAS NON-NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENT WHICH GOVT WOULD USE
TO PRESERVE ORDER AND INSURE UNDISTURBED PROCESS OF POLITICAL
CHANGE. (GOVT ANNOUNCED THE SAME DAY ITS DECISION TO PREVENT
DEMONSTRATION JAN 20 OF "COMMUNIST-INFLUENCED GROUPS" INTENT
ON UPSETTING PUBLIC ORDER. SEE REF) GOVT, HE SAID,
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WAS WORKING "CALMLY AND WITH PROUDENCE" ON POLITICAL MEASURES

DESIGNED TO MOVE FROM SITUATION CHARACTERIZED BY UNCONDITIONAL PERSONAL ALLEGIANCE TO A NEW DEMOCRATIC FRAME-WORK BASED ON INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION. HE IMPLIED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND THE PROSPECT OF A REFERENDUM. AT THE SAME TIME, ARIAS WOULD REMAIN "LOYAL TO HIS ORIGINS" AND NOT SUPPORT ANY "SUICIDAL PROPOSALS". END SUMMARY

1. ARIAS ATTACKED SUBVERSIVE GROUPS WHICH WERE TRYING TO UPSET INTERNAL PEACE AND TO FORCE THE GOVT TO STOP ITS PLANS FOR AN ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION. ARIAS PROMISED THAT THESE GROUPS WERE DESTINED TO FAIL AND SAID THE GOVT INTENDED TO USE ALL THE MEANS AT ITS DISPOSAL TO ACHIEVE THIS RESULT. THE GOVT'S AUTHORITY COULD NOT BE NEGOTIATED. IT DID NOT INTEND TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY FOR HAVING LACKED THE WILL TO EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY. (THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR SECURITY ISSUED A STATEMENT THE SAME DAY SAYING THAT IT WOULD PREVENT THE UNAUTHORIZED DEMONSTRATION JAN 20 OF "COMMUNIST-INFLUENCED GROUPS" WHICH HAD NOT APPLIED FOR PERMISSION TO DEMONSTRATE "FOR AN AMNESTY AND THE UNFREEZING OF WAGES".)

2. ARIAS SAID THAT HE WOULD BE TRUE TO HIS ORIGINS AND NOT ADVOCATE "SUICIDAL PROPOSALS". THE GOVT WAS WORKING ON POLITICAL MEASURES TO REFORM THIS STRUCTURE, HE SAID, BUT WAS DOING SO WITH SERIOUSNESS, PRUDENCE, AND CALMNESS.

3. THE GOVT'S AIM, HE SAID, IS TO PERFECT THE INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM AS URGED BY THE KING TO ALLOW EXISTING SOCIAL FORCES TO PLAY THE ROLE OF REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS SO THAT SPAIN COULD PASS FROM A SYSTEM OF UNCONDITIONAL PERSONAL ALLEGIANCE TO A SYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION. THE GOVT WAS NOT SEEKING A LEGAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES AND THOSE REPRESENTED BUT RATHER AN AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC OPINION AND REPRESENTATIVES AS EXPRESSED THROUGH "LEGITIMATE CHANNELS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION". THE KEY WORD IS "REPRESENTATIVITY" HE SAID, ADDING THAT THIS WAS THE WAY IN WHICH PARTICIPATION WAS CARRIED OUT IN MODERN DEMOCRACIES. ARIAS HINTED AT A REFERENDUM WHEN HE SAID THAT CHANGES WOULD HAVE TO HAVE POPULAR APPROVAL.

4. COMMENT: ARIAS' EARLIER SPEECHES IN 1974 AND 1975 WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALWAYS CHARACTERIZED BY AN ACCENT ON LAW AND ORDER. SINCE FRANCO'S DEATH, HOWEVER, LAW AND ORDER HAS ONLY BEEN HINTED AT IN HIS SPEECHES. THE UPSURGE IN SPORADIC STRIKES, POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS, SIT-INS IN CHURCHES, AND VIOLENCE IN THE BASQUE PROVINCES HAVE ALL ADDED UP TO A NEW SITUATION WHERE ARIAS APPARENTLY FEELS THAT HE MUST REMIND SPANIARDS OF HIS EARLIER STATED PREREQUISITE FOR POLITICAL REFORM: PUBLIC ORDER. ARIAS AND HIS NEW COLLABORATORS, PRINCIPALLY FRAGA, HAVE MADE

UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR THEIR RESOLVE TO PREVENT EXTREMIST-INSPIRED
DISORDERS FROM DIVERTING THEM FROM THE GOAL OF TRANSFORMING
SPAIN'S POLITICAL SYSTEM. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PCE SEEMS DE-
TERMINED TO TRY TO PROVIDE THE GOS.

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